

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 DRC-01 /096 W

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R 031800Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1011

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2837

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MX

SUBJECT: SITREP NO. 56: PATTERSON KIDNAPPING: MORNING NEWS
ROUNDUP

1. MOST APRIL 3 MEXICO CITY DAILIES CARRY STORIES
PATTERSON DISAPPEARANCE, BUT MOSTLY IN POLICE SECTION.
STORIES GENERALLY BASED ON DEPARTMENT STATEMENT RELEASED
APRIL 2 BUT VERY CONSIDERABLY, MUCH UNFOUNDED SPECULATION
BY PRESS CONTINUES.

2. EXCELSIOR TOOK LINE "KIDNAPPED VICE CONSUL BELIEVED
IN U.S., "KIDNAPPERS MIGHT BE FOREIGNERS, JUDICIAL
POLICE SAY." "MEXICAN FEDERAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE AND
THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE TODAY REVEALED THAT THE AMERICAN
VICE CONSUL JOHN PATTERSON WAS TAKEN OUT OF MEXICO TO THE
UNITED STATES." "THEY EVEN COMMENTED THAT THE
KIDNAPPERS MIGHT BE FOREIGNERS. THEY DISCARDED THE
POSSIBILITY THAT PATTERSON'S KIDNAPPING HAD POLITICAL
MOTIVES."

3. LA PRENSA, SAYS: "THREATS OF MORE VIOLENCE IF THEY
SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THE VICE CONSUL." ALTHOUGH
PARAPHRASED, STORY FOLLOWS THE STATE DEPARTMENT
STATEMENTS. LA PRENSA AND OTHER PAPERS SAY ANDRA
PATTERSON LEFT CONSUL YELTON'S HOME AT 5:00 A.M. TO GO TO
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THE CONSULATE AND WAS FOLLOWED BY REPORTERS, WITHOUT GOING

INTO ADDITIONAL DETAILS.

4. NOVEDADES HEADLINED: "PATTERSON'S RANSOM DEPOSITED IN A BANK." "VICE CONSUL'S RETURN EXPECTED WITHIN 48 HOURS." "KIDNAPPERS THREATEN TO KILL MORE US CITIZENS IF THEY ARE CAPTURED." ALONG WITH THE HERALDO CORRESPONDENT'S STORY NOVEDADES PUBLISHES A DISPATCH FROM THE SPANISH NEWS AGENCY EFE FROM WASHINGTON SAYING: "THE GROUP OF MEXICAN TERRORISTS WHO LAST MARCH 22 KIDNAPPED THE AMERICAN VICE CONSUL JOHN PATTERSON HAD THREATENED TO KILL AN AMERICAN EACH WEEK IF ANY OF ITS MEMBERS IS DETAINED BY POLICE, THE US STATE DEPARTMENT REVEALED TODAY IN WASHINGTON." "IN THE FIRST EXTENSIVE OFFICIAL STATEMENT SINCE THE KIDNAPPING, THE STATE DEPARTMENT REVEALED THAT THE THREAT IS INCLUDED IN PATTERSON'S RANSOM LETTER, THE ONLY COMMUNICATION UNTIL NOW WITH THE KIDNAPPERS." STORY CONTINUES THAT JOHN KING, STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, ALSO INFORMED OFFICIALLY THAT THE VICE CONSUL'S WIFE FOLLOWED INSTRUCTIONS ON THE NOTE STRICTLY TO DELIVER THE MONEY BUT DID NOT ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE KIDNAPPERS. THE SPOKESMAN DID NOT WISH TO REVEAL WHEN THE ATTEMPT TO DELIVER THE MONEY WAS MADE NOR TO CONFIRM THAT THE AMOUNT ASKED WAS 500,000 DOLLARS. ON WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM KING SAID: "THE POLICY OF THE US GOVERNMENT ON KIDNAPPING CASES HAS NOT CHANGED." THE UNITED STATES HAS REPEATEDLY REFUSED TO OFFER MONEY IN EXCHANGE FOR THE LIVES OF THEIR DIPLOMATS. LAST YEAR TWO AMERICAN DIPLOMATS WERE MURDERED IN SUDAN AS A RESULT OF THIS POLICY. THE STORY GOES ON TO QUOTE PARAGRAPHS OF THE STATEMENT DISTRIBUTED YESTERDAY.

5. EL HERALDO HEADLINES: "THEY CONFIRM THE VICE CONSUL WAS KIDNAPPED." ALFREDO MARRON, THE REPORTER SENT BY EL HERALDO TO HERMOSILLO SAYS NEWSMEN COVERING THE CASE ARE DIVIDED OVER PATTERSON'S FATE: SOME THINK HE WAS TAKEN TO THE UNITED STATES (DAYTONA HE SAYS) AND OTHERS THINK HE HAS BEEN KILLED. MARRON PARAPHRASES THE STATEMENT DISTRIBUTED YESTERDAY AND MISQUOTES SOME PARAGRAPHS, "DESPITE THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN PATTERSON, IT IS A FACT THAT IT IS A KIDNAPPING." MARRON SAYS THE STATEMENT ALSO EXPLAINS THAT THE CASE WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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WRAPPED IN SILENCE DURING THE FIRST DAYS SINCE KIDNAPPERS THREATENED AMERICAN OFFICIALS WITH DEATH."

6. EL SOL SAYS: "JOHN PATTERSON'S KIDNAPPERS ARE AMERICANS; INDICATIONS THAT HE HAS BEEN MURDERED. IT IS BELIVED THEY CROSSED THE BORDER THE SAME DAY THE KIDNAPPING OCCURED. ELEVEN DAYS AFTER THE KIDNAPPING OF VICE CONSUL JOHN PATTERSON, THE KIDNAPPERS HAVE HAD

NO CONTACT WITH HIS WIFE ANN, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE MONEY ASKED FOR HIS RELEASE IS READY SINCE SEVERAL DAYS AGO. "THIS SILENCE MAKES MEXICAN POLICE THINK THAT THE DIPLOMAT HAS ALREADY BEEN MURDERED, IN A FORM SIMILAR TO WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE INDUSTRIALIST FERNANDO ARANGURE, IN GUADALAJARA. IT IS FULLY PROVED THAT THE KIDNAPPERS ARE OF AMERICAN ORIGIN AND THEY PROBABLY CROSSED THE BORDER WITH PATTERSON TOWARDS THE STATE OF ARIZONA, THE SAME DAY OF THE KIDNAPPING. MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE SENT HERE EXPRESSLY TO HELP WITH THE INVESTIGATION HAVE FLOWN IN HELICOPTER OVER GREAT EXPANSES OF DESERT WHERE THERE ARE SOME 110 ABANDONED MINES, LOOKING FOR ANY CLUES ON THE VICE CONSUL'S KIDNAPPERS OR FOR HIS CORPOSE." THE REST OF THE STORY IS ABOUT INCIDENTS AROUND THE CONSULATE.

7. SEMI-OFFICIAL EL NACIONAL PUBLISHES A SMALL NOTICE ON PAGE 11 SAYING GOM ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE WORKING TO LOCATE PATTERSON. STORY SAYS THAT UNTIL NOW THE GOM ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE HAS NO PROOF THAT THE VICE CONSUL WAS KIDNAPPED AND THAT THE CASE IS BEING HANDLED AS A SEARCH FOR A MISSING PERSON.

8. NO REPORT SIGNIFICANT NEWS IN HERMOSILLO PRESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, PRESS COMMENTS, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, COMMERCIAL BANKS, EXTORTION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MEXICO02837
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740075-0327
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740471/aaaacmzb.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 SEP 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <24-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SITREP NO. 56: PATTERSON KIDNAPPING: MORNING NEWS ROUNDUP
TAGS: PINR, PINS, ASEC, MX, US, (PATTERSON, JOHN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005